Governor Launches Open Data Portal

New interactive website reflects administration's commitment to transparency, streamlines access to public information

Wilmington, DE – Joined by technology entrepreneurs, open data advocates, members of his cabinet, and others, Governor Markell visited Wilmington co-working space 1313 Innovation Wednesday evening for the unveiling of a new statewide open data portal that streamlines access to public information and enhances government transparency. The Open Data Portal (data.delaware.gov) is a centralized website that connects the public with non-identifiable public data across state agencies and provides interactive features that allow users to browse and sort information and engage with data through maps, charts, and graphs to visualize it in new and innovative ways. The site also features an enhanced online State Checkbook (checkbook.delaware.gov) which provides financial data on state spending and revenue in a format that is easy to access, interact with, and understand.

"The Open Data Portal reflects our commitment to creating higher levels of openness and transparency in state government," said Governor Markell. "It provides new access to public information that impacts the lives of Delawareans and their families and we hope that this interactive resource will not only deepen civic engagement, but also empower members of the public, researchers, and others to use this information to recommend solutions to the challenges we face and create new applications that will benefit the government and our communities."

The Open Data Portal was established through Executive Order 57, signed by Governor Markell earlier this year. That Order also created the Open Data Council, whose members from ten

state agencies and offices are charged with making data available to the public, establishing a statewide data strategy, and recommending standards and policies governing the posting of pubic data and data sharing among state agencies. The Council worked to identify the initial datasets that were included in the Open Data Portal and will continue to prioritize datasets for future publication.

"The launch of the Delaware Open Data Portal represents a major milestone in the State's journey to leverage data as a strategic asset. The ability to have public data readily available for consumption by citizens, businesses and innovative technology developers will ultimately make Delaware an even better place to live, work, and play", said Delaware Chief Information Officer James Collins.

The Delaware [Open Data Portal](#) contains more than 30 datasets and over 35 maps, including:
• Health data on restaurant inspections;
• Vital statistics for state births and deaths, Medicaid enrollment information, and even popular baby names;
• Data on student preparation and performance and library usage;
• Geo-coded maps featuring parks, natural areas, and traffic counts. Datasets with locations are able to be mapped in the portal, such as licensed child care providers and schools;
• Information about state contract data, bids and proposals received, and supplier diversity figures; and
• Delaware's Newly Revamped Checkbook, a record of spending information, credit card transactions and revenue figures

Members of the public are invited to recommend additional datasets for inclusion in the Open Data Portal by visiting data.delaware.gov/nominate.

The Open Data Portal builds on the Markell Administration's work to improve openness and transparency across state government, beginning in 2009 with the launch of the online

state checkbook, which provided unprecedented access to state spending. It includes [Executive Order 31](#), signed in 2011, [which established uniform Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) policies across executive branch agencies](#) to reduce the time and expense of making a FOIA request and to ensure that agencies collaborate to produce public records, and legislation signed into law in 2014 that expanded and strengthened Delaware's FOIA law. In addition, the Governor signed a package of legislation in 2012 that expanded disclosure of campaign donations and improved lobbying laws. [Details on the Administration's efforts to build a more transparent, efficient, and accountable government are available here](#).

"Open Data Delaware is thrilled to see the state launch the new Open Data Portal. We are building a civic tech community of technologists, developers, designers, entrepreneurs, and community advocates all looking to help diagnose and solve community issues using open data", said Ryan Harrington of Open Data Delaware.

"The Technology Forum of Delaware supports, promotes, and connects technology businesses and entrepreneurs. We are excited about the potential that open data brings for businesses and entrepreneurs," said George Rotsch, board member of the Technology Forum of Delaware.

"Zip Code Wilmington and our students are looking forward to the opportunities presented by the new Open Data portal. We plan to use open data in class projects, allowing students to explore areas of interest while analyzing actual data and applying it to real world problems that impact our community." said David Ginzberg of Zip Code Wilmington.

Kjell Hegstad, a Wilmington-based entrepreneur and his team, recently won a Code for Philly competition in Philadelphia for a technology platform named Dealspace. "Dealspace is for property investors who are searching for properties of

interest in their local community. With $2 million in transactions already using open data, blockchain smart contracts, and crowdfunding, we look forward to finalize our funding round and start using more Delaware-based data in Dealspace, and other projects," said Hegstad.